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Comprehensive review of special political missions

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 16 September 2016, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its seventy-first session the item entitled "Comprehensive review of special political missions" and to allocate it to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

2. The Fourth Committee considered the item at its 17th, 18th and 23rd meetings, on 27 and 28 October and on 8 November 2016. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee's consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records.[1]

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions (A/71/330).

4. At the 17th meeting, on 27 October, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs introduced the report of the Secretary-General. The Under-Secretary-General for Field Support also made a statement.

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.4/71/L.6

5. At the 23rd meeting, on 8 November, the representative of Mexico, on behalf of Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, the

[1] A/C.4/71/SR.17, A/C.4/71/SR.18 and A/C.4/71/SR.23.

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Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Uruguay, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Comprehensive review of special political missions" (A/C.4/71/L.6). Subsequently, Angola, Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Palau, Portugal and Thailand joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

7. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.4/71/L.6 without a vote (see para. 8).

III. Recommendation of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

8. The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Comprehensive review of special political missions

The General Assembly,

Guided by the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling its resolutions 67/123 of 18 December 2012, 68/85 of 11 December 2013, 69/95 of 5 December 2014 and 70/92 of 9 December 2015 on the comprehensive review of special political missions,

Reaffirming its commitment to respecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States,

Recalling the primary role of the United Nations and the respective roles and authority of the General Assembly and the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter, and recalling also in this context the contribution of regional and subregional arrangements and the important role they can play, as appropriate,

Acknowledging the adoption by the General Assembly and the Security Council of substantively identical resolutions 70/262 and 2282 (2016) of 27 April 2016, based on the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture,[1] which enhance the focus on sustaining peace as a goal and a process, including through conflict-prevention efforts across the Organization, and recognizing, in this regard, the important role played by special political missions in this area, where mandated,

Encouraging enhanced exchanges of information, in an appropriate manner, among the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat, making use of the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission, when relevant, on overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions,

Reaffirming the principles of impartiality, consent of the parties, national ownership and national responsibility, and stressing the significance of the views of and dialogue with countries hosting special political missions,

Recalling the relevant reports on the review of arrangements for funding and backstopping special political missions,[2] which addressed the financial and administrative arrangements pertaining to such missions, recognizing that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters,

[1] See A/69/968-S/2015/490.
[2] A/66/340 and A/66/7/Add.21.

Recognizing, in this regard, the importance of adequately resourcing the peacebuilding components of relevant special political missions, including during mission transitions and drawdown, to support the stability and continuity of peacebuilding activities,

Stressing the need for the United Nations to continue to improve its capabilities in the pacific settlement of disputes, including mediation, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Acknowledging the significant increase in the number and complexity of special political missions and the challenges faced by them,

Recognizing the important role of the special political mission as a flexible tool for the maintenance of international peace and security, including through contributing to a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding and sustaining peace,

Recognizing also the need for system-wide coherence between special political missions and the United Nations system, and emphasizing the importance of close cooperation between special political missions, peacekeeping operations and United Nations country teams for maintaining sustainable peace, conflict prevention and conflict resolution,

Recognizing further the need for special political missions to operate under clear, credible and achievable mandates, including through the articulation of their goals and purposes, and the need to review their progress as stipulated in their respective mandates,

Recognizing the importance of efforts towards improving broad geographical representation, gender balance and expertise in the composition of all special political missions, and acknowledging the necessity of reducing the overall environmental footprint of relevant special political missions,

Reaffirming the important role of women in prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and recognizing the importance of the equal and effective participation and the full involvement of women at all levels, at all stages and in all aspects of the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and conflict resolution,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General[3] and the report of the High-level Independent Panel,[4] on "United Nations peace operations", as well as the report of the Secretary-General on the results of the global study on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 on women, peace and security,[5] which formed the basis for its subsequent resolutions acknowledging the emphasis on the primacy of political solutions to conflicts,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to resolution 70/92;[6]

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[3] A/70/357-S/2015/682.
[4] See A/70/95-S/2015/446.
[5] S/2015/716.
[6] A/71/330.

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to hold regular, inclusive and interactive dialogue on the overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions, and requests the Secretariat to reach out to Member States prior to the holding of such dialogue to ensure wide and meaningful participation;

3. *Respects* the purview of the mandate of special political missions, as stipulated in the respective relevant resolutions, recognizes the specificity of each mandate of such missions, and emphasizes the role of the General Assembly in discussing the overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions;

4. *Acknowledges* the importance of strong coordination, coherence and cooperation of the Security Council and the General Assembly with the Peacebuilding Commission, and in this regard notes the intention of the Security Council to regularly request, deliberate and draw upon the specific, strategic and targeted advice of the Peacebuilding Commission, including to assist with the longer-term perspective required for sustaining peace being reflected in the formation, review and drawdown of peacekeeping operations and special political missions mandates, as stated in General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016);

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, at its seventy-second session, a timely report on the implementation of the present resolution regarding the overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions, including efforts towards improving expertise and effectiveness, transparency, accountability, geographical representation, gender perspective and women's equal participation, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to include relevant detailed information on these matters in the report;

6. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session the item entitled "Comprehensive review of special political missions" and to consider the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General under that item.